THE HUMAN FLY™
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THE WILDEST SUPER-HERO EVER--BECAUSE HE'S REAL!
THE HUMAN FLY™
ALONE--AGAINST THE MECHANIZED MONSTERS OF A MADMAN!
COCKRUM
SINNOTT
THE FLY BECOMES A ONE-MAN ASSAULT FORCE!
TO STORM THE FORTRESS OF FEAR!

Stan Lee presents: THE HUMAN FLY!

BILL MANTLO WRITER ✶ LEE ELIAS ARTIST ✶ DON PERLIN INKER ✶ I. WATANABE, LETTERS D. WARFIELD, COLORS ✶ ARCHIE GOODWIN EDITOR

THEY TOLD HIM FROM THE START THAT IT WAS A SUICIDE CLIMB--DANGEROUS ENOUGH DURING THE DAY, EVEN FOR THE MOST EXPERIENCED CLIMBER...BUT DEADLY, IMPOSSIBLE AFTER SUNDOWN!
HE LISTENED... AND THEN HE BEGAN HIS TORTUROUS ASCENT--FOR THERE WAS A LIFE AT STAKE, AND HE WAS THE HUMAN FLY!
LOST RADIO CONTACT WITH TED AND BLAZE IN THE PROP-PLANE OVER AN HOUR AGO! THESE CLIFFS MUST BLOCK OUT TRANSMISSION!
I'M ON MY OWN NOW--MORE ALONE THAN I'VE EVER BEEN!
CASTLE IN THE CLOUDS!

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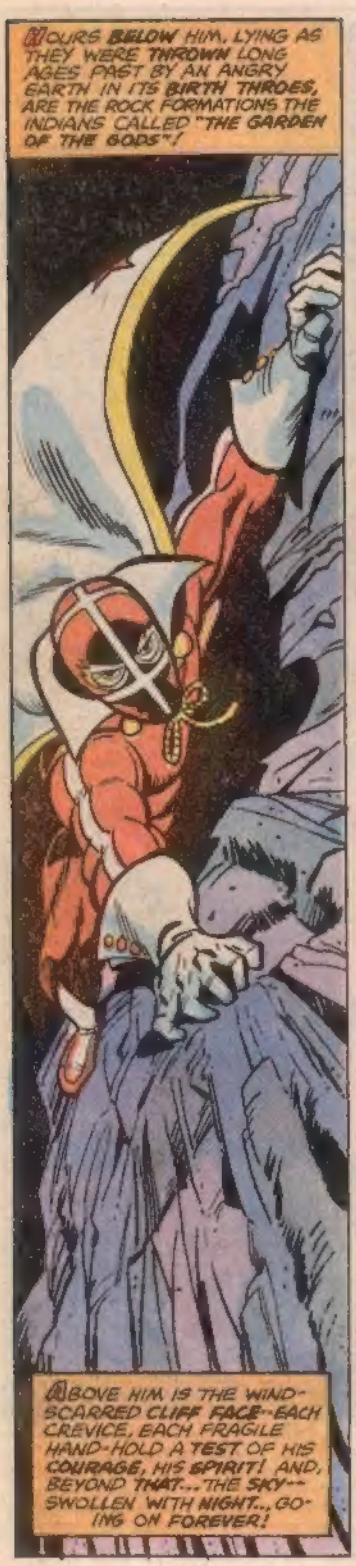
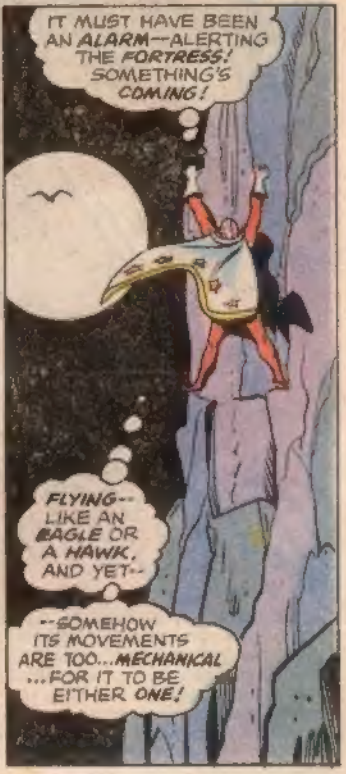
SUPAME SCANS


HOURS BELOW HIM, LYING AS THEY WERE THROWN LONG AGES PAST BY AN ANGRY EARTH IN ITS BIRTH THROES, ARE THE ROCK FORMATIONS THE INDIANS CALLED "THE GARDEN OF THE GODS"!
ABOVE HIM IS THE WIND-SCARRED CLIFF FACE--EACH CREVICE, EACH FRAGILE HAND-HOLD A TEST OF HIS COURAGE, HIS SPIRIT! AND, BEYOND THAT... THE SKY--SWOLLEN WITH NIGHT... GOING ON FOREVER!

IT'S GOING TO GET TRICKY! THIS FACE PUSHES BACK AT AN ANGLE!
IF I'M NOT CAREFUL MY WEIGHT WILL--!
ALMOST WITH A SIGH, THE ROCK SLIDES AWAY BENEATH HIS FEET!

FINGERS... FEEL LIKE... BEING PULLED FROM THEIR SOCKETS!
BUT THEY'RE... HOLDING-- DIGGING IN!
SOMEDAY I'LL HAVE TO THANK THE DOCS FOR BOOSTING MY SKELETAL STRUCTURE WITH STEEL--

--AND REMIND THEM THAT I'M THE ONE WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE CRIPPLED FOR LIFE! *
EH? I'VE TRIPPED SOME KIND OF LIGHT-BEAM ON THE NEXT LEDGE!
*SEE THE HUMAN FLY #1--ARCHIE.


IT MUST HAVE BEEN AN ALARM--ALERTING THE FORTRESS! SOMETHING'S COMING!
FLYING-- LIKE AN EAGLE OR A HAWK, AND YET--
--SOMEHOW ITS MOVEMENTS ARE TOO... MECHANICAL ...FOR IT TO BE EITHER ONE!

IT'S A CONDOR-- A ROBOT-DRONE-- AND IT MEANS TO SWEEP ME FROM THE LEDGE!
THE METALLIC BIRD OF PREY DIVES FOR THE KILL--
--WHILE THE FRAIL MANCHILD CLINGING TO THE LEDGE PREPARES TO DEFEND HIMSELF!
WE CANNOT BE BLAMED IF HIS EFFORTS COME TO NOTHING--
KTLANG!
--FOR HE IS ALL TOO HUMAN-- OUT OF HIS ELEMENT--
FALLING! I'M FINISHED, UNLESS--!
--AND HIS METALLIC ATTACKER IS INCAPABLE OF FEELING ANY PAIN!
DID IT! MANAGED TO TWIST-- GRAB HOLD OF ITS WING!
BUT ITS SENSORS HAVE REGISTERED THE ADDED WEIGHT! IT KNOWS I'M HERE!
AND IT'S CLIMBING-- TRYING TO SHAKE ME OFF!
SKREE

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AND IT MAY JUST SUCCEED UNLESS I CAN FLIP FORWARD--SECURE A HANDHOLD NEAR ITS HEAD--
SKEEEE
--AND JAB AROUND WITH THE HOPE THAT I CAN KNOCK OUT ITS GUIDANCE SYSTEMS--
--BEFORE IT KNOCKS ME OFF!
FASHT!
ALL RIGHT--GUIDANCE IS OUT! BUT THE BLASTED THING'S STILL FLUTTERING AROUND OUT OF CONTROL!
MAYBE IF I TRY TO CUT ITS POWER--?
SKREEE*
IT'S GONE DEAD--STARTING TO SPIRAL DOWN TO THE CANYONS BELOW!
WHICH IS WHERE I MOST DEFINITELY DO NOT WANT TO GO!
HAVE TO TRY A VARIATION OF THAT STUNT I SAW SPIDER-MAN DO BACK IN HOUSTON!* IF I LOCK MY ARMS STRAIGHT OUT--HAVING STEEL JOINTS HELPS--
--I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FORCE THE ROBOT'S WINGS TO CATCH THE WIND, TURNING IT INTO A HUGE HANG-GLIDER!
IT'S WORKING! NOW TO AIM IT BACK AT THE CLIFF-FACE!
* FLY #1 -- ARCH.

SUPAH SCANS

BUT, WHILE HE CAN SOMEWHAT CONTROL THE DRONE'S DIRECTION, THE FLY CANNOT CONTROL THE SPEED OF ITS DESCENT!
BUWOOM
THANK GOD THIS LEDGE WAS NEAR--
--OR I'D BE RACING THE DRONE DOWN THAT CLIFF-FACE!
THAT'S ONE CONTEST I PREFER TO STAY OUT OF!
NOW, UNLESS THERE ARE MORE SURPRISES, THERE'S NOTHING BUT A SHORT CLIMB BETWEEN ME AND THE FORTRESS--
--AND A GIRL NAMED LEXY...
...ALEXANDRA!
THE OMINOUS GRAY SHAPES HAD CUT EVER CLOSER TOWARDS HIM THROUGH THE CLEAR WATER OF THE POOL!
HE FOUGHT THE FEAR WELLING UP WITHIN HIM--

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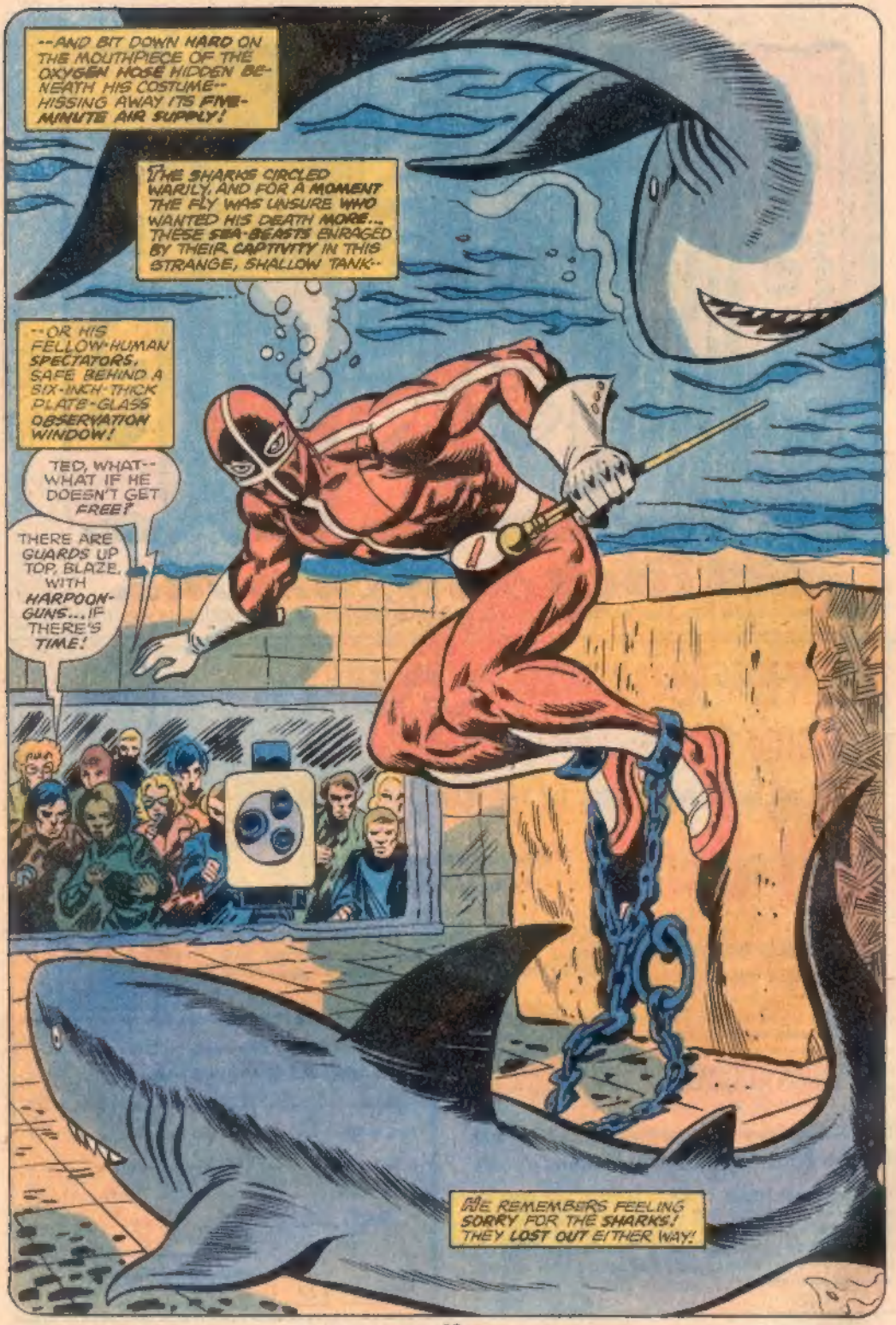
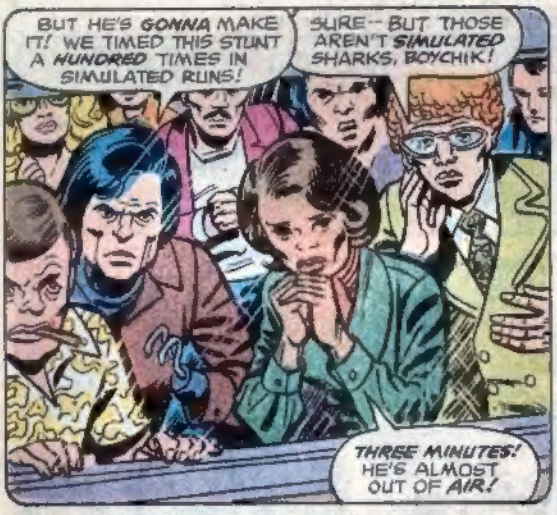
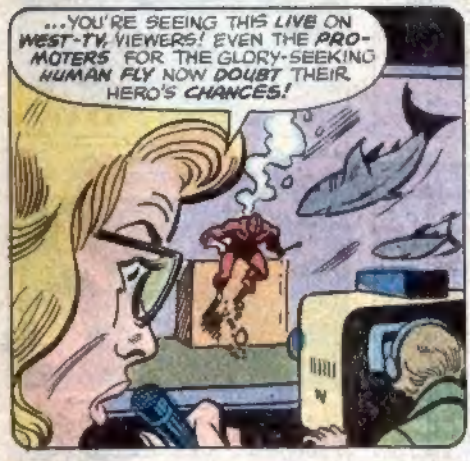
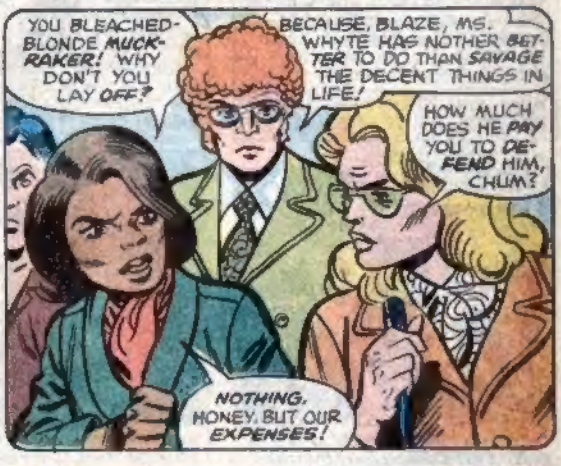

--AND BIT DOWN HARD ON THE MOUTHPIECE OF THE OXYGEN HOSE HIDDEN BENEATH HIS COSTUME--HISSING AWAY ITS FIVE-MINUTE AIR SUPPLY!
THE SHARKS CIRCLED WARILY, AND FOR A MOMENT THE FLY WAS UNSURE WHO WANTED HIS DEATH MORE... THESE SEA-BEASTS ENRAGED BY THEIR CAPTIVITY IN THIS STRANGE, SHALLOW TANK--
--OR HIS FELLOW-HUMAN SPECTATORS, SAFE BEHIND A SIX-INCH-THICK PLATE-GLASS OBSERVATION WINDOW!
TED, WHAT--WHAT IF HE DOESN'T GET FREE?
THERE ARE GUARDS UP TOP, BLAZE, WITH HARPOON-GUNS...IF THERE'S TIME!
HE REMEMBERS FEELING SORRY FOR THE SHARKS! THEY LOST OUT EITHER WAY!


BUT HE'S GONNA MAKE IT! WE TIMED THIS STUNT A HUNDRED TIMES IN SIMULATED RUNS!
SURE--BUT THOSE AREN'T SIMULATED SHARKS, BOYCHIK!
THREE MINUTES! HE'S ALMOST OUT OF AIR!

LOCKE, IF HE DIES I'M HOLDING YOU RESPONSIBLE!
THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAID WHEN YOU BOUGHT THE STUNT--OR WHEN THE MONEY FROM ADVANCE SALES STARTED COMING IN!


...YOU'RE SEEING THIS LIVE ON WEST-TV VIEWERS! EVEN THE PROMOTERS FOR THE GLORY-SEEKING HUMAN FLY NOW DOUBT THEIR HERO'S CHANCES!


YOU BLEACHED-BLONDE MUCK-RAKER! WHY DON'T YOU LAY OFF?
BECAUSE, BLAZE, MS. WHYTE HAS NOTHER BETTER TO DO THAN SAVAGE THE DECENT THINGS IN LIFE!
HOW MUCH DOES HE PAY YOU TO DEFEND HIM, CHUM?
NOTHING, HONEY, BUT OUR EXPENSES!

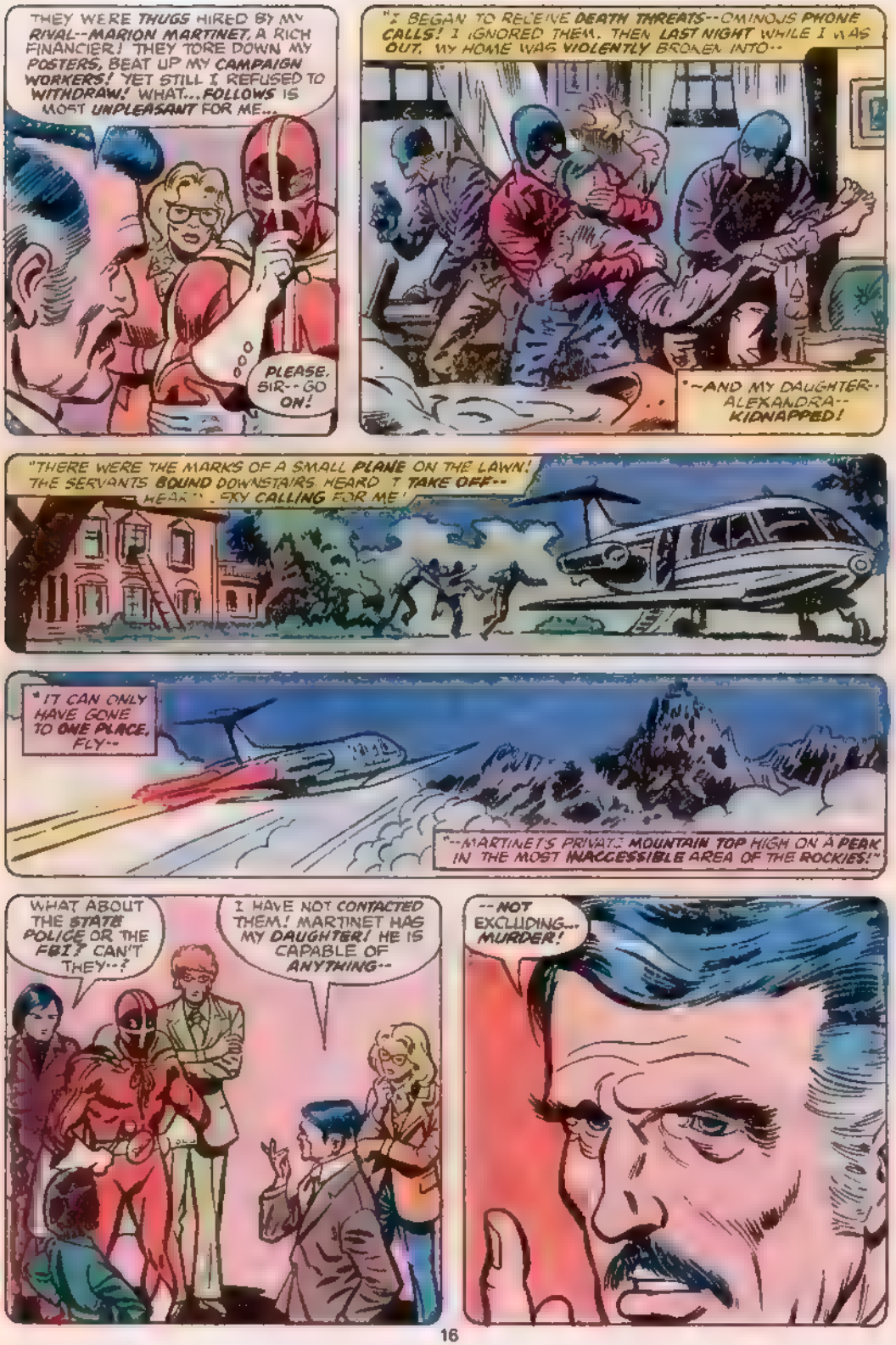
"WE WORK WITH THE FLY BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN WHAT HE'S DOING! GIVING HOPE --THROUGH EXAMPLE-- TO THOUSANDS OF CRIPPLED AND DISABLED KIDS!"
I GUESS THEY'VE DECIDED THERE ARE NO STRINGS ATTACHED! THEY'RE COMING FOR ME--
--TOGETHER!
THAT'S BETTER THAN TED AND I PLANNED! HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEY'RE ALMOST ON TOP OF ME--

--THEN KICK OUT UNDER THEM--
--PULLING TAUT ON THE CHAIN ABOUT MY ANKLES--

--SO THEY SNAP THE WEAK LINK WE BUILT INTO THE CHAIN WHEN THEY HIT IT IN THEIR RUSH ON ME! SO FAR EVERYTHING'S GOING PERFECTLY!
SKRAK!
NOW I JUST HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS TANK ALIVE!
AND THE EASIEST WAY TO DO THAT IS TO GET SOME HELP FROM FINS, HERE!
A MILD ELECTRIC SHOCK-- TRIGGERED FROM A STUD IN MY BATON-- SHOULD MAKE HIM MAD ENOUGH TO--
--THRASH UPWARDS WITH HIS SNOUT...WHICH I JUST HAPPENED TO BE STANDING ON!
SORRY TO DEPRIVE YOU OF YOUR LUNCH, FRIEND--
--ESPECIALLY SINCE I WILL BE HAVING MINE TODAY... THANKS TO YOU!
SPLOOSH
BY EVERY NAME IN THE PHONE BOOK!
THE FLY MADE IT!

STILL, I BET THE LADY-LEECH ISN'T IM-PRESSED!
NOT AT ALL, MR. BERMAN!
WELL, I AM IMPRESSED, MS. WHYTE-- ENOUGH TO SEEK THE FLY'S HELP--
--AND PAY FOR IT HANDSOMELY!
HOLY-- IT'S DAVID DREIR! THE RICHEST GUY IN THE STATE!
I HAVE HEARD OF YOU, FLY! I KNOW YOU DON'T ACCEPT MONEY PERSONALLY, BUT ONLY FOR CHARITY!
NAME YOUR CAUSE, FLY, AND YOUR PRICE! IT WILL BE MET--
--AS SOON AS YOU RETURN MY DAUGHTER TO ME.
I THINK YOU'D BETTER START AT THE BEGIN-NING, MR. DREIR!
OF COURSE, FLY, I AM EXTREMELY WEALTHY--
--AND, SINCE MY WIFE DIED, I HAVE TRIED TO USE MY RICHES FOR THE BET-TERMENT OF THIS STATE!
"I FELT MY AIMS MIGHT BEST BE ACHIEVED WERE I TO BE ELECTED TO STATE OFFICE-- AND SO I BEGAN TO RUN FOR THE GOVERNORSHIP!"
VOTE
WITH YOUR HELP, I WILL DRIVE THE UNDESIRABLES FROM OUR STATE--!
IN '77
THEN START WITH YOUR-SELF, DREIR--
--'CAUSE SOME OF US LIKE THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE!
STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
GIVIN' YOU YOUR FIRST LESSON IN POLITICS, POPS!
IF YOU LIKE LIVIN' --DON'T TRY FOR A SECOND ONE!

SUPAME SCANS


THEY WERE THUGS HIRED BY MY RIVAL--MARION MARTINET, A RICH FINANCIER! THEY TORE DOWN MY POSTERS, BEAT UP MY CAMPAIGN WORKERS! YET STILL I REFUSED TO WITHDRAW! WHAT...FOLLOWS IS MOST UNPLEASANT FOR ME...
PLEASE, SIR--GO ON!
"I BEGAN TO RECEIVE DEATH THREATS--OMINOUS PHONE CALLS! I IGNORED THEM. THEN LAST NIGHT WHILE I WAS OUT, MY HOME WAS VIOLENTLY BROKEN INTO--
"--AND MY DAUGHTER--ALEXANDRA--KIDNAPPED!
"THERE WERE THE MARKS OF A SMALL PLANE ON THE LAWN! THE SERVANTS BOUND DOWNSTAIRS HEARD IT TAKE OFF--
HEAR"...SKY CALLING FOR ME!
"IT CAN ONLY HAVE GONE TO ONE PLACE, FLY--
"--MARTINET'S PRIVATE MOUNTAIN TOP HIGH ON A PEAK IN THE MOST INACCESSIBLE AREA OF THE ROCKIES!"
WHAT ABOUT THE STATE POLICE OR THE FBI? CAN'T THEY--?
I HAVE NOT CONTACTED THEM! MARTINET HAS MY DAUGHTER! HE IS CAPABLE OF ANYTHING--
--NOT EXCLUDING--MURDER!

FORGIVE ME FOR INTRUDING ON YOUR GRIEF, SIR--BUT THIS MAN WHOSE HELP YOU'RE ASKING IS A CHARLATAN! A FRAUD!
BUT THAT PLANE HE SAVED IN HOUSTON--?
NOT TO MENTION THE CITY THE MERCENARY WOULD HAVE DROPPED IT ON IF NOT FOR THE FLY!
THE POLICE COULD HAVE DONE THE JOB SOONER IF HE HADN'T INTERFERED!
THAT'S A LIE, AND YOU KNOW IT, LADY!
TOUCHING! YOU'RE ALL SO LOYAL TO HIM YOU'LL BELIEVE ANYTHING HE TELLS YOU!
I--I'M SORRY I CAME HERE! I...HAVE A DAUGHTER WHO MAY BE . DYING WHILE YOU ARGUE!
MR. DREIR, I'VE READ ABOUT YOU! YOUR DAUGHTER--
--SHE'S A POLIO VICTIM ISN'T SHE SIR? A CRIPPLE?
SINCE BIRTH, FLY.
I WILL ATTEMPT TO RESCUE HER, MR. DREIR-- FOR HER SAKE!
ALL I ASK IS, IF I SHOULD FAIL, THAT YOU THEN CALL IN THE POLICE!
A-AGREED. FLY AND ...THANK YOU!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE I RECALL READING ABOUT DREIR AND HIS DAUGHTER--BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS!
PROBABLY NOTHING IMPORTANT--THE RICH ARE ALWAYS IN THE NEWS!
CAN'T THINK ABOUT THAT NOW, THOUGH! I'VE GOT TO CONCENTRATE GETTING PAST THIS OVERHANG!
I WONDER WHY THIS SECTION OF THE CLIFF SEEMS CHARRED.
THE OUTCROP WAS A LEDGE--AS BLACKENED AS THE CLIFF--
..LEADING TO A CAVE LARGE ENOUGH TO HOUSE A SMALL ARMY, OR--!
ROAARRR
THAT SOUND... LIKE THUNDER COMING FROM WITHIN THAT CAVE! WHATEVER'S CAUSING IT--
ROARRR
--IS COMING OUT!
NOW I UNDERSTAND THE FIRE-BLASTED ROCKS! THE CAVE IS A HANGAR--
--AND THE LEDGE A LAUNCHING-RAMP FOR THE FORTRESS!
I MUST LOOSEN MY GRIP AND FALL--
--OR I'LL GET BURNED ALIVE BY THE JET'S BACKWASH!

FALLING TOO FAST TO GRAB A HANDHOLD WITHOUT PULLING MY ARMS FROM THEIR SOCKETS!
BUT THERE ARE STEEL-MESH FIBERS INTERWOVEN WITH THE MATERIAL OF MY CAPE...!
SKRIT!
IF I CAN JUST HOOK IT OVER--!
DID IT... BUT I'M SWINGING TOWARDS THE--
WHAP
--CLIFF!
HEAD'S RINGING--BUT I'M ALIVE!
GOT TO TRY RADIO-CONTACT AGAIN... LET TED AND BLAZE KNOW I'M STILL IN THE RACE!
FLY TO PROP-PLANE ...COME IN, PEOPLE!
AND IN THE CLOUDS FAR ABOVE...
TED--IT'S THE FLY! HE'S ALL RIGHT!
WE'RE RECEIVING YOU, FLY! GO AHEAD!
I'M ABOVE THE SURROUNDING CLIFFS, NOW NEAR THE FORTRESS! CLOUD COVER IS TOO THICK FOR VISUAL CONTACT, BUT MY RADIO-SIGNAL CAN LEAD YOU IN! CIRCLE--BUT WAIT UNTIL YOU HEAR FROM ME!
WILL DO, FLY!
SURE BUT WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG--
--AND HE'S UNABLE TO CONTACT US?
I HEARD THAT BLAZE! GIVE ME TWO HOURS--
--THEN CALL IN THE STATE POLICE... WITH A SEARCH PARTY!
TELL THEM TO LOOK FOR TWO BODIES AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN--
--MINE... AND LEXY'S!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

SQUARE SCANS

THEN THE FLY ENDS VOICE-TRANSMISSION AND IS ALONE AGAIN!
PWOOSH
THERE'S ONLY ONE PROPELLANT-CHARGE IN MY BATON FOR THIS STUNT!
I WAS SAVING IT, IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY!
BUT IF ANYTHING QUALIFIES ...THIS DOES!
THE FLY BEGINS HIS CLIMB BACK TO THE LEDGE--
--AND, LONG MOMENTS LATER...
NOTHIN HERE! JEEZ-- THE BOSS HAS BEEN JUMPY SINCE THAT ALARM WENT OFF!
CAN'T BLAME HIM. SOMETHIN' HAPPENED TO THAT BIRD OF HIS!
HUNH! THAT DAMNED ROBOT GOES NUTS AN' FLIES ITSELF IN TO THE CLIFF--
- AN' WE GOT T' FREEZE OURSELVES DEAD 'CAUSE OF IT!
IT'S STUPID! AIN'T NOBODY ALIVE COULD SCALE THIS MOUNTAIN!
NOT EVEN A HUMAN FLY!

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT ORDERS IS ORD--!
H-HELP!!
DON'T WORRY, FRIEND - YOU'LL LAND SAFE, BUT UNCONSCIOUS, ON THE LEDGE BELOW--
--WHERE YOUR TRIGGER-HAPPY PARTNER WILL SOON BE JOINING YOU!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, CHUM --GKKK!
PTOW!
SORRY TO CONTRADICT YOU, LONE RANGER--
--BUT THAT'S WHAT I KNOW!
WHAK
HMMM... THERE'S SOMETHING TED AND I HADN'T CONSIDERED! EVEN WITHOUT ITS PROPELLANT CHARGE--
--MY HAND-THROWN BATON MAKES AN EXCELLENT BOLA!
AND, LOOKING AT THIS COWLED SLEEPING BEAUTY HAS GIVEN ME YET ANOTHER IDEA...

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AND, A SHORT WHILE LATER...
AM I GLAD THAT'S OVER! IT'S COLDER'N' PLUTO OUT THERE!
YEAH, AN' MAYBE THE BOSS'LL RELAX SINCE WE DIDN'T FIND NUTHIN'!
HE'S BEEN EXPECTIN' SOMETHIN' TO HAPPEN EVER SINCE WE NABBED THE GIRL!
WHERE'S HE KEEPIN' HER?
UP IN THE TOWER--WHERE HER OLD MAN'LL NEVER REACH HER!
THE OLD MAN GETS OUT OF POLITICS--PAYS TO GET HER BACK--
--AN' IT'S GONNA BE GRAVY DAYS FOR US, PAL!
NOT IF I CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT--
"--PAL!"
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO GET SOME GRUB? I'LL STAND GUARD FOR A WHILE!
SURE! YOU KNOW WHAT THE BOSS WOULD DO TO ME IF I LEFT MY POST?
NO-- BUT I SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE LESS GENTLE THAN... THIS!
WHAM!
HEY-- UNGHH!

I DON'T KNOW IF I'M CUT OUT FOR THIS HERO BUSINESS!
MY KNUCKLES ARE STILL STINGING FROM THAT ONE!
STILL, IF I'VE PLAYED MY CARDS RIGHT--
ALEXANDRA--BUT, ASLEEP...? NO! DRUGGED!
I'D BETTER CONTACT TED AND BLAZE--FAST!
BUT, BEFORE THE FLY CAN ACT...
UNHH!
WELL, MY CRIMSON CRUSADER --I DON'T KNOW, OR CARE, WHO YOU ARE--
--BUT I WARNED DREIR ABOUT TRYING TO KIDNAP MY DAUGHTER AGAIN! TOO BAD YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR HIS MISTAKE!
JUST GIVE THE WORD, MR. MARTINET!
IF YOU'RE AS STUNNED AS THE FLY, PILGRIMS, BE BACK NEXT ISSUE FOR:
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NIGHTMARE!

Stan Lee presents: MARVEL® BULLPEN BULLETINS

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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Stop the presses! We just changed the title of our next great "Origins" book! Instead of THE SUPER WOMEN, it will be called THE SUPERHERO WOMEN when it explodes like a literary bombshell in bookstores everywhere sometime in October! We probably had a sensational reason for changing the title to THE SUPERHERO WOMEN, and I'd like to tell you what it was—except I forgot! Anyway, I'll tell you the contents next ish; for now, I just wanted to make sure that you're not spending all your spare time trying to remember the wrong title! Incidentally, if there's a Marvel fan anywhere whom I haven't met at some zingy Comicon or other, here's your chance to remedy that grevious situation. I'm scheduled to appear at the great new Chicago Con on August 6th, and the Houston Con on August 19th. If you're in the neighborhood, drop in and say hello. You know how shy I am—I need all the support I can get. Hey! Don't let me forget another big item! Our great new 1978 calendar goes on sale the end of August! This is the voomiest one of all, 'cause it's one huge Spider-Man Calendar! Yep, the whole blamed thing is a towering tribute to the world's most popular super-hero—and it'll be on sale in bookstores everywhere! And how's this for a block-busting announcement—? The great new *live-action* CBS-TV prime-time Spider-Man made-for-television movie should be premiering some time in September. Watch for the announcements in your local newspaper. But even if you miss the paper, don't worry—the whole town'll be talking about it! And just wait'll we tell you—in future issues—about the whole kaboodle of Marvel movies which Universal Pictures is working on right now! And finally, while you're writing to your local newspaper, telling 'em you can't wait for Howard the Duck, here's a little something to keep you busy. See if you can figure out what PIZZAZZ is—and guess who's publishing it! (Aww, someone musta given you a hint!) More info later—we've gotta keep some surprises for next month! But now, as we tearfully bid each other an emotion-drenched adieu, let us always remember those immortal words of Irving Forbush: "Hey, Lee, shaddup awreddy and let's get to the good stuff!" Or, as the Hulk would probably say: "Oui s'excuse s'accuse!"

Excelsior!

Hey, like it? It's gonna be our new trade mark!

ITEM! Let's start by rolling out the welcome mat for Rambling RICK PARKER, late of the sunshine state of Florida, who has just become the latest recruit to the Bullpen's legion of lettering correctionists. (Yes, hard as it is to believe, even *our* laudable letterers and winning writers make occasional mistakes.) Rick also promises to be a worthy addition to the Merry Marvel Softball Team, which is about to leap into league action once again (more of that at a later date). Also joining our sterling staff is Slim JIM SALICRUP. Actually, *re*-joining would be more correct—as Jim did a sizeable stretch in our British Reprint Department, until he was wooed away to labor in the corporate corridors of the monolithic Mad Genius Associates (otherwise known as Steve Gerber, Dave Kraft, and whoever happens to be in the office with them at any given moment). Now, Mr. Salicrup is back to take over the editing of our American reprint books. Good to have you with us again, Jim!

ITEM! As long as we're being effusive, let's also congratulate ROGER "Sterno" STERN and Gentle JO DUFFY, editorial experts extraordinaire, on their recent promotions higher into the hierarchy of our color comics editorial department, as a result of ROGER SLIFER's move up to helm our black-and-white comic mags (which we reported on last month). And, though they technically haven't had any kind of promotion, we should also mention Energetic ED HANNIGAN and Reliable RALPH MACCHIO, because they sometimes proofread this column, and we wouldn't want any mizzteaks to creeeep in juzt becuz of hert feeligz.

ITEM! Now that your who's-working-at-which-job scorecard is brought up to date, we can fill you in on some of the pulsating projects the folks mentioned above—along with myriad other of our titanic talents—have readied for your enjoyment this late summer season. Like, for instance, the *second* of our Marvel Movie Specials, THE DEEP. Editor ROGER SLIFER has teamed writer DOUG MOENCH, whose PLANET OF THE APES adaptations are *still* drawing praise, with illustrator CARMINE INFANTINO (his distinct approach to underwater action in this project has us all wondering if perhaps this isn't the perfect guy to bring Prince Namor, the savage SUB-MARINER, back in his own series) on this all-stops-out adaptation of the motion picture adventure based on PETER "Jaws" BENCHLEY's best selling novel. It's all here, just like in the blockbuster Columbia film—the shipwreck, the dive for sunken treasure, the school of sharks in their feeding frenzy, and the ever-mounting menace of the giant eel! We've done this one up in a double-length color comic package to give it to you complete in one issue. THE DEEP will be waiting for you this month at your local newsstand. Don't miss it. It's a big one!

ITEM! But THE DEEP is not the only double-length book aimed your way this August. Our King-Size Summer Annuals are still coming out in force. There's the INCREDIBLE HULK, piloted and plotted by the Lively One himself, LEN WEIN, scripted by DAVE "The Dude" KRAFT, and illustrated by Happy HERB TRIMPE (who, with his art chores on our new GODZILLA comic, as well as his long-time association with the Hulk, may just about have the *greenskin* market sewn up tight); then, there's the FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL in which MARV WOLFMAN and KEITH POLLARD, writer and artist respectively, ingeniously pit the World's Greatest Comics Team against not only the uncanny Inhumans, but against the Gong Show as well; and finally, there's Stellar JIM STARLIN's awesome AVENGERS ANNUAL which guest-stars Captain Marvel and Warlock and cosmically chronicles Earth's Mightiest Heroes' epic struggle against the mad Titan, Thanos. In fact, so epic is this struggle that the second part of it will be presented in the TWO-IN-ONE ANNUAL (on sale in September) and involve Spider-

Man and the ever-lovin' blue-eyed Thing! So, that's four to watch for, but if you want *more* (plus an end to this doggerel), may we point out that August also holds two Marvel Classics, KIDNAPPED and PIT AND THE PENDULUM; two of our cooperative efforts with the happy folks of Hanna-Barbera, YOGI BEAR and DYNOMUTT; and, lastly but decidedly not leastly, two new issues of black-and-white magazine favorites, THE RAMPAGING HULK and SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN. If you need help shortening the long, hot summer, these Bullpen bonuses may be just what you want!

We hate to close the page on a solemn note, but by now you've been hit with the hard fact that the price of our regular color comics has risen to thirty-five cents and our double-length books have gone up to sixty cents. Naturally, we owe you an explanation. Unfortunately, if you've had to buy a candy bar, a paperback book, or—heaven forbid—a pound of coffee, the answer is already obvious. Ever-spiraling costs; ever-mounting inflation. Once again we've been faced with rising printing, engraving, and paper prices, and once again we've reached the point where we're forced to make *our* prices reflect those new costs. We're sorry. We've tried to hold the line as long as possible, and we succeeded in doing it several *months* longer than any of our competitors. We hope that's helped a little. Your loyalty and support in the past made us the number one comic book company, and we appreciate it greatly. Now, we're going to be working all the harder to *keep* that loyalty and support, to produce the very best possible comics available. . . at any price. And that's a promise, pal.

FLY PAPERS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE, N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Archie,

I just read HUMAN FLY #1, and felt I had to write in and comment.

First of all, the script by Bill Mantlo was really excellent, the best he's turned in since the SONS OF THE TIGER strip. The art by Lee Elias was competent and quite acceptable.

In the Fly, Marvel has a truly unique product. It's the first comic in a good many years based on a real person. And it's the most un-Marvel comic you've ever produced. The Fly is not a neurosis-ridden "everyman" stumbling into a radioactive accident, thus gaining super-powers. His "sense of responsibility" doesn't tell him to go out and fight crime as a way of serving humanity. While his stunting is just as flamboyant, just as visually exciting, and just as dangerous and suspenseful as crime-fighting, it serves mankind in a much more immediate, useful manner. The Human Fly is the one character in your line-up most deserving of the title *hero*.

These points need to be emphasized. The Fly is *not* a crime-fighter. He should not be facing criminals and super villains in every issue. He has no *need* or reason to fight crime.

His stories should be centered around his stunt exhibitions, on his helping people in need or trouble, on his adventures to mountaintops or jungles, and so forth. The possibilities and locales are endless. The Human Fly has the potential of becoming the first truly *nonviolent* adventure hero in comics, as well as the first who doesn't rely on rehashing the perpetual battle between a simplistic *good* and a simplistic *evil*.

But, whatever you decide to do with him, please keep him away from crime-fighting. The first issue in which I see the Fly patrolling New York looking for bad guys is the last issue I buy.

Please, guys, you've got something rare and wonderful here. Don't ruin it.

Rich Fifield
PO Box 188
Presidio of Monterey, CA 93940

In response to your thoughtful letter, Rich, we have no plans of turning the Human Fly into a crime-fighter—simply because, in *real life*, he *isn't* one! While we're as aware as you are of the visual and story possibilities, and while we will be taking some license with the characterization in order to present the Human Fly as a comic book figure, we will be constantly anchoring ourselves to his inherent reality. So, while in this issue it may seem as if he's become embroiled in a battle of good versus evil, we think you'll be surprised and pleased by the outcome next issue. And while we've already had the Fly meet Spider-Man in the first issue and Ghost Rider in the second, we don't really plan on having him combat any major Marvel villains or stop any earth-shaking plots or attain cosmic awareness. . .unless, of course, such things should happen to his real-life counterpart. (Now *that* would be interesting!)

Dear Everybody,

I just got done reading the fantastic first issue of HUMAN FLY, and I really enjoyed it! Keep up the good work (you, too, Mr. Rojatt) and keep 'em FLY-ing!

Mitchell Cojocarin
1319 Elbridge St.
Philadelphia, Pa 19111

Mr. Rojatt?

Dear Folks,

Migawd, but you've got to be *kidding* with that "The Making of a Hero" logo on the letters page.

Might I suggest something more appropriate, i.e. *Fly Papers*?

Stan Timmons
3604 Valdez Dr.
Lafayette, IN 47905

Why not?

Dear Marvel, Bill, Lee, Joe, Marie, Archie, and the Human Fly:

I just read HUMAN FLY #1, and it left me speechless. I was so thrilled to see a comic mag hero with *human* problems handled in such a way as to show that anything, no matter how big, can be defeated if one has the will to survive. Keep up the good, I mean *excellent*, work.

I thank you.

Ed Walsh
PO Box 175
Taunton, ME 02780

Dear Bill, Lee, and everyone else:

If the first issue of HUMAN FLY is an example of future issues, you've got a winner on your hands. Not only was it exciting, entertaining, and suspenseful, but it even co-starred our friendly neighborhood Spider-Man!

I understand that the Human Fly is a real-life death-defier. I would like to know more about the man this comic is about. Might I suggest a text feature in each issue that deals with the *real* Human Fly? Perhaps you could have interviews, coverage of his exploits, and—what I would like to see most of all—a photo-section showing the real hero. What about the supporting cast? Are they real also?

Ray Kolasa
36 North Point Trail
Rochester, NY 14617

The Fly's supporting team are fictional characters, Ray, based on the ideals the real Human Fly has stated—that people can overcome their physical and psychological handicaps if they believe in themselves. As for your suggestion, we agree with you entirely and will see what we can do to have the *real* Human Fly appear in this mag with his two-dimensional *other self*.